B: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1961 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

its own hearth to kindle its own fire in the new camp. The responsibility of members of a nuclear family in times of crisis, such as birth, puberty, marriage and death, does not differ much from the responsibility of the band as a whole, the difference being one of degree or intensity.

The age group functions as a major institution of education, instructing the group junior to it in its ways, preparing it for advance to the next, their own, level. Thus the care and education of children rests largely with youths and the oldest of the elders. Youths and hunters depend on each other in the joint hunting and gathering activities, the youths learning from their mothers and fathers all they will soon need to know as hunters themselves. Hunters gradually associate more and more with the *mangesi* (literally, "the great ones") around the evening fires, to listen to the talk of the elders and, in time, to participate.

As an economic unit the age group is of supreme importance. Children scavenge and help supply their own needs through fishing, trapping, snaring and any other forms of collecting or hunting within their means. In this they may at times be helped by the youths. The youths are of vital importance to the hunt, the girls acting as beaters with their mothers, and also collecting, while the boys stand guard at the extremities of the circle of nets, having assisted in setting up the nets. Youths may also be expected to perform a number of chores such as fetching wood and water into the camp. The hunters are the prime unit responsible for the sustenance of the band; the *mangesi* are absolved from such responsibilities and may expect to be fed, housed and clothed by the younger age groups.

Politically each age group has informal jurisdiction over its members, utilizing ridicule and ostracism, sometimes driving a member to seek acceptance in the lower age level, or justification by the upper. For a lower age level to ridicule or ostracize a member of a higher level is a supreme condemnation and a most powerful sanction. Further, it will be seen that part of the *molimo* festival is a morning tour of the camp by the youths, carrying the *molimo* trumpet and disguised by leaves and branches, at which time they single out the hut of any troublemaker, however young or old, and threaten to tear it to pieces. Even if there is no such troublemaker, the youths will go from hut to hut stripping a few leaves off the roof of each, causing other minor damage, simply representing the accepted principle of authority, of law and order.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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quite so with the girls. But by the end of the festival bonds have been forged between the *bamelima* that will never be broken and that will provide a firm basis for co-operative activity throughout their lives.

The other thing achieved is that there seems to be at least a temporary obliteration of the bonds of the nuclear family. The nuclear family has no particular responsibility toward the festival, though they will generally contribute more food than others and may offer shelter, and it has absolutely no authority. Further, although relations between brother and sister are free at all times, it is worth noting that in the *elima* house the girls sleep with the boys of their choice openly and without shame, though their own brothers may be among the boys sleeping with other girls beside them. It is difficult, however, to determine whether or not sexual intercourse, which is permissible at this time, openly takes place under such conditions. I am told that it does.

Neither do kinship considerations seem to play any important role, and certainly no predetermined role, in the instruction of the girls. The only roles that are distinguishable as such are the provider of the *elima* hut, the mother of the *elima*, the father of the *elima*, the assistants and the rest of the *bamelima*.

Of these, the *bamelima* are without question an age group with no kinship considerations. The assistants are primarily close friends and confidantes of the *elima* girls, and seem likely to be related distantly, but there are no stated preferences concerning this. It is said that the father of the *elima* does not have to be a relative at all; his job is to use force, if necessary, to stop the somewhat violent altercations that break out among the attendant youths or between them and the *bamelima*. It is said that the mother of the *elima* is usually an elderly relative of the parental or grandparental level, and that the provider of the hut can be anyone willing to put up with the noise. Table 7a shows the kin relationship between these various roles and the *elima* girls in an *elima* held among the Epulu Mbuti at the end of 1957 and into the beginning of 1958. It also shows the relationship of those senior girls who took the most prominent part in the instruction of the *bamelima*. Tables 7b–d show the same relationships on three other occasions among other net-hunting bands.

Instruction, as already mentioned, is in song, and in such of the arts of motherhood as are yet unknown to the girls. The instructors, apart from the mother of the *elima*, are senior members of the same generation as the *bamelima*, and mostly married, or else they are el-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1985 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

ders. Like the "mother," their role is also that of chaperone, however, for the second most important activity, after song, is the selection of and sleeping with lovers.

Sexual experimentation is certainly a major element in the *elima*, but it is combined with a very definite move to widen the social horizons of the girls, and to direct their attentions into what the parental and grandparental generations consider proper directions. There are also certain rules about intercourse in the *elima* hut. The senior girls, or instructors, and the "mother" guide the *bamelima* in all this. Their decisions are never questioned, and never discussed by the rest of the band. It is not until the latter stages of the festival that the parental generation takes an active part in the proceedings.

The widening of horizons is achieved by taking the girls to visit neighboring bands. On such visits they may stay for only a day, or for several nights, depending on whether the girls find suitable lovers. It is considered important by everyone that the *elima* house should be a place of what is best translated as enthusiastic lovemaking. At first it is modest in scale, and, depending on the composition of the band, is likely to take place early on and within the ordinary hunting camp. The boys who will enter the *elima* hut will be the younger ones, not likely to be serious suitors. They may enter only if they are invited by a girl, and the girl is forbidden to invite anyone related to her on her father's side or closely related on her mother's side. Effectively that means any descendant of the father's father or of the mother's mother; the children of any of the father's brothers or sisters or half brothers or half sisters, and the children of any of the mother's full brothers or sisters. Invitation is made by the girl, who whips the boy of her choice. The girls come out of their hut at regular intervals, during the day to begin with, armed with pliable young saplings. They seek out and soundly beat whatever boys lawfully take their fancy, if they can catch them.

Any boy so whipped is under an obligation, whether he likes it or not, to enter the *elima* hut later that day. When he does so he is subject to a further beating by the *bamelima*, and even then may not be invited to sleep with the girl who first selected him. Unless she gives him permission, he may not sleep with her. And if she allows him to lie with her, he again has to have her permission before intercourse can take place. The men say that once they lie down with a girl, however, if they want her they take her by surprise, when petting her, and force her to their will.